

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6079

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 BUJUMBURA 0343

E.O.: 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: PARM - ANNUAL POLICY AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT -
PART I

PART I - POLICY ASSESSMENTS

A. U.S. INTERESTS

AMERICAN INTERESTS IN BURUNDI HAVE NOT MUCH CHANGED
OVER THE YEARS AND REMAIN ESSENTIALLY MINOR IN THE SENSE
THAT NO DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRY, NO MATTER HOW EXTREME,
COULD HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON U.S. INTERESTS OR
THE U.S. POSITION IN AFRICA. IN THIS CONTEXT, OUR
FIRST CONCERN IS FOR HUTU-TUTSI ETHNIC RECONCILIATION,
IMPROVED AND MORE HUMANE LIVING STANDARDS, AND SOUND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO PREVAIL WITHIN BURUNDI, WHILE
REGIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN BURUNDI AND ITS NEIGHBORS
IS ENHANCED.

SECONDLY, IT IS IN THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL INTEREST OF
THE U.S. FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO BE PRESERVED FOR AMERICAN
BUSINESSMEN TO INVEST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BURUNDI'S
MINERALS, IF THEY SO DESIRE.

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THIRDLY, THE U.S. WOULD BENEFIT marginally IF BURUNDI
ADOPTED A MORE GENUINELY NON-ALIGNED POSITON ON INTER-
NATIONAL AND SOME AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES INSTEAD OF
ADHERING IN MOST CASES TO THE RADICAL GROUPING OF THRID
WORLD STATES. IN THE SAME VEIN, MORE MODERATE BURUNDI
POSITIONS ON NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC ISSUES WOULD BE HELPFUL.

FOURTHLY, BURUNDI REMAINS A MODERATELY USEFUL POST FOR THE SURVEILLANCE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF COMMUNIST AND RADICAL ARAB NATIONS IN BURUNDI AND NEIGHBORING AREAS, TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER SUCH ACTIVITIES MIGHT IMPINGE ON MORE IMPORTANT AMERICAN INTERESTS ELSEWHERE.

FINALLY, THE U.S. WILL WANT TO CONTINUE TO PROTECT THE ABOUT 195 AMERICAN CITIZENS RESIDENT IN BURUNDI (ABOUT SEVEN-EIGHTS MISSIONARIES) AND THE INSUBSTANTIAL AMOUNTS OF AMERICAN INVESTMENT HERE (UNDER \$250,000).

B. OVERVIEW

BURUNDI IS AT A CROSSROADS IN ITS EVOLUTION AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION, AND ITS CHOICE OF DOMESTIC POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES OVER THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO MAY WELL BE DECISIVE IN DETERMINING WHETHER IT HAS AN EVENTUAL CHANCE TO EMERGE AS A VIABLE NATION OR WHETHER IT WILL FLOUNDER ON TOWARDS A MORASS OF DISORDER AND DECAY IN THE SOCIAL, ETHNIC, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL DOMAINS.

THE NEW MILITARY REGIME WHICH ON NOVEMBER 1, 1976 OUSTED MICHEL MICOMBERO, THE APPARENTLY INVULNERABLE PRESIDENT SINCE 1966, AT FIRST SEEMED TO MARK LITTLE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE ELITE POWER STRUCTURE OF THE COUNTRY. THIS IMPRESSION AROSE BECAUSE THE COUP D'ETAT HAD BEEN EFFECTED BY GROUPS WITHIN THE ALL-TUTSI ARMY WHO WERE PREDOMINANTLY THE SAME OFFICERS WHO HAD BEEN THE MAINSTAY OF THE OLD
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GOVERNMENT. THE HUTUS, WHO COMPRISE 85 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION, WERE AGAIN GIVEN LITTLE MORE THAN TOKEN REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT AND NO ACCESS TO MILITARY POSITION.

FIRST APPEARANCES, HOWEVER, WERE ALMOST CERTAINLY DECEPTIVE, BECAUSE, IN FACT, THE NATION'S NEW LEADERSHIP GIVES PROMISE OF OPENING THE WAY TO A PROFOUND CHANGE IN BURUNDI'S DESTINY. THE FUNDAMENTAL NOVELTY IS THAT IN THE TOP ECHELONS OF BOTH THE ARMY AND CIVIL SERVICE, A NEW HALF-GENERATION, TEN YEARS YOUNGER THAN ITS PREDECESSORS, HAS COME TO POWER, WITH MUCH OF ITS YOUTHFUL IDEALISM INTACT. THESE MEN ARE DECIDELY BETTER TRAINED AND EDUCATED THAN THEIR ELDERS, AND MANY OF THEM SEEM TO HAVE AN URGE TO ENSURE NATIONAL SALVATION THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE REFORMS. SUCH MOTIVATIONS WERE USUALLY WHOLLY LACKING AMONG THE FORMER RULERS, WHO, WITH ONLY A FEW EXCEPTIONS, WERE VENAL, SELF-SERVING INTRIGUERS, WITHOUT PATRIOTIC PURPOSE OR VISION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 4 BUJUMBURA 0343

AMONG MINISTERS, DIRECTORS GENERAL, AND DIRECTORS, IT IS NOW COMMON TO FIND MEN IN THEIR MIDDLE TWENTIES WHO ARE INEXPERIENCED IN APPLYING THEIR UNIVERSITY TRAINING, BUT WHO START OUT WITH A WILL TO REVERSE THE NATIONAL DECLINE. AMONG THE ADMINISTRATORS OF THE COUNTRY'S 80 COMMUNES, OVER THREE-FOURTHS OF THE OLD-TIMERS, WHO WERE MOSTLY TRADITIONAL RURAL CHIEFS OR MINOR TUTSI ARISTOCRATS, HAVE BEEN OUSTED, WITH THEIR REPLACEMENTS BEING YOUNG SCHOOL OFFICIALS, AGRONOMISTS, AND OTHER TECHNICIANS. THE NEW UPRONA PARTY FUNCTIONARIES ARE PRESUMABLY OF THE SAME STRIPE.

PRESIDENT BAGAZA HAS IN TWO MAJOR POLICY ADDRESSES SET FORTH A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM TO MOVE THE NATIONAL AWAY FROM ITS PAST COLLISION COURSE WITH COLLAPSE. ITS MOST CRITICAL ELEMENT IS A FRANK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT UNLESS HUTU-TUTSI ANTAGONISMS ARE OVERCOME WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A NEW DEAL AN OF NON-DISCRIMINARTORY EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HUTU MASSES, BURUNDI HAS NO FUTURE AT ALL. THIS IS EASIER SAID THAN DONE, BUT IT IS A MASSIVE STEP FORWARD, SINCE MICOMBERO FORBADE ANY MENTION OF THE PROBLEM. BAGAZA, MOREOVER, IS TRYING TO IMPLEMENT HIS WORDS WITH MEASURES TO REVIVIFY LOCAL AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, SUPPRESS RAMPANT CORRUPTION, REORIENT THE FLOW OF INVESTMENT
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RESOURCES TOWARD THE COUNTRYSIDE, UPDATE THE PLANNING MECHANISM, CURB THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S ECONOMIC EXCESSES, COORDINATE NATIONAL POLICY (THROUGH INSTALLATION OF A POEREFUL PRIME MINISTER), AND INDUCE MASS PARTICIPATION IN NATION-BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSESS.

IT IS OBVIOUSLY IN ACCORD WITH PRIMARY U.S. INTERESTS IN BURUNDI THAT THE BAGAZA GOVERNMENT SHOULD SUCCEED IN ITS BASIC POLICIES, AND IT IS HEARTENING THAT A CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM IS POSSIBLE. YET, ONE ANNOT FORGET BURUNDI'S CHECKERED POLITICAL HISTORY, ITS CRITICAL DEFICIENCIES IN TRAINED MANPOWER, ITS GROSS GAPS IN INFRASTRUCTURE, ITS RESIDUAL ETHNIC ANTAGONISMS, ITS BACKWARD SOCIAL TRADITIONS, AND ITS ALREADY EXCESSIVE AND STILL GROWING HUMAN PRESSURES ON SCARCE AGRICULTURAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES. THUS, THE RISK REMAINS VERY REAL OF SERIOUS FAILURE, FOLLOWED BY FURTHER INSTABILITY, RENEWED JOCKEYING FOR POWER, AND A RELAPSE INTO THE PURSUIT OF PERSONAL AGGRANDIZEMENT INSTEAD OF NATIONAL BETTERMENT. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES WILL HAVE MUCH TO D WITH THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE NEW EXPERIMENT IN BURUNDI OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THE BAGAZA ADMINISTRATION IS GENERALLY MAINTAINING TRADITIONAL EXTERNAL PRIORITIES OF CLOSER TIES WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS, ESPECIALLY RWANDA AND TANZANIA, ACCOMPANIED BY CONTINUED RHETORICAL ASSOCIATION, FOR THE MOST PART, WITH THE MORE RADICAL POSITONS OF OAU AND NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES. WHILE BURUNDI WILL NOT BECOME TANGIBLY INVOLVED, IT WILL GIVE STRONG AND DEEPLY FELT VERBAL SUPPORT TO THE BLACK CAUSE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

NEVERTHELESS, IT WILL, AS BEFORE, GENERALLY AVOID DIRECT POLEMICS WITH ITS MAIN EUROPEAN FRIENDS (BELGIUM, FRANCE, WEST GERMANY, AND ITALY), AND IT WILL ENCOURAGE THE WEST TO MAINTAIN LARGE OFFICIAL AID PROGRAMS. RAPPORT WITH THE UNITED STATES WILL WARM FURTHER AS THE BILATERAL

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AID PROGRAM'S IMPACT IS FELT. RENEWED INSTABILITY IN ZAIRE WILL CERTAINLY BE DISTASTEFUL TO BUJUMBURA, BUT IT IS QUITE DOUBTFUL THAT TROUBLES THERE WILL HAVE ANY NOTICEABLE SPILLOVER EFFECT, WHICH COULD SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT BURUNDI'S DOMESTIC FORTUNES, ITS REGIONAL POSITION, OR ITS LOGISTIC NEEDS AND ARRANGEMENTS (THOUGH TANZANIA).

THE CLIMATE WILL STAY PROPITIOUS FOR WESTERN CAPITAL INVESTMENT, WITH THE MAIN PROBLEM BEING WHETHER THE PROFIT PROSPECTS FROM MINERALS DEVELOPMENT (NICKEL,

URANIUM, AND RARE EARTHS) WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY ATTRACTIVE TO LURE INVESTORS, GIVEN BURUNDI'S OTHER GEOGRAPHICAL, POLITICAL, AND STRUCTURAL DRAWBACKS. CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT MISSIONARY GROUPS FROM WESTERN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA WILL ALSO FIND A CONTINUED WELCOME FOR THEIR INDISPENSABLE SUPPORT TO BURUNDI'S NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND ITS RURAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6081

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 4 BUJUMBURA 0343

BURUNDI'S TRADE WITH NON-OECD COUNTRIES WILL REMAIN VERY SMALL (UNDER 10 PERCENT OF TOTAL), AND THE BONANZA IN COFFEE PRICES IN 1977 AND 1978 SHOULD GIVE THE NEW REGIME AN EASY BREATHING SPACE ON BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS, WITH UNPRECEDENTED AMOUNTS OF HARD CURRENCY BECOMING AVAILABLE FOR PRODUCTIVEUSE INSIDE THE COUNTRY. MILITARY SUPPLY AND TRAINING RELATIONSHIPS WILL FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS, AS NOW, BE ORIENTED TOWARD THE USSR AND CERTAIN RADICAL ARAB LEAGUE COUNTRIES, WITH ONLY FRANCE MAKING A SUBSTANTIAL WESTERN INPUT.

C. OBJECTIVES, COURSES OF ACTION, AND ISSUES

1. THE FOREMOST OBJECTIVE IS TO HELP TO CONSOLIDATE THE TREND NOW UNDER WAY IN BURUNDI TOWARD HUTU-TUSI ETHNIC RECONCILIATION, WHICH IS THE INDISPENSABLE PREREQUISITE FOR STABILITY AND PROGRESS.

2. THE NEXT PRIORITY IS TO DEVELOP AND DEEPEN FURTHER THE BILATERAL DIALOGUE WHICH HAS GOTTEN UNDERWAY BETWEEN

THE U.S. AND THE NEW REGIME IN ORDER TO CREATE AN
ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH MOVES IN PROTECTION OF AMERICAN
INTERESTS CAN BE MORE EASILY ADVANCED.

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3. THE OBJECTIVES OF SUCH A DIALOGUE WILL BE TO MAINTAIN
A FAVORABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR AMERICAN INVESTORS AND
TRADERS IF THEY CHOOSE TO UNDERTAKE LARGE SCALE MINING
PROJECTS IN BURUNDI; TO FACILITATE THE CONTINUED WELCOME
AND PROTECTION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS, MAINLY MISSIONARIES,
IN BURUNDI; TAAPERSUADE BURUNDIAN OFFICIALS TO PAY GREATER
HEED TO THE VALIDITY OF U.S. POSITIONS ON VARIOUS INTER-
NATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES, ESPECIALLY IN
THE NORTH-SOUTH CONTEXT; AND TO GIVE APPROPRIATE AND
TACTFUL ADVICE ON THE PURSUIT OF A SOUND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COURSE FOR BURUNDI.

4. IT SHOULD ALSO BE OUR AIM TO ENCOURAGE WEST EUROPEAN
DONORS BOTH TO REMAIN THE PRIME SOURCES OF FOREIGN
ASSISTANCE IN BURUNDI (AS PART OF THE EFFORT TO ASSURE
A RELATIVELY MODERATE APPROACH BY THE REGIME ON DEVELOP-
MENT POLICY ISSUES), AND TO PARTICIPATE IN MOVES FOR THE
BETTER COORDINATION AND MORE EFFICIENT USE OF FOREIGN AID
RESOURCES. SUCCESS IN THESE ENDEAVORS WILL AUTOMATICALLY
TEND TO LIMIT THE INROADS OF COMMUNIST AND RADICAL ARAB
INFLUENCE ON BURUNDI'S DOMESTIC COURSE.

5. A RELATED OBJECTIVE TO ADVANCE THE ATTAINMENT OF MORE
EFFECTIVE REGIONAL AND BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION BE-
TWEEN BURUNDI AND ITS NEAR NEIGHBORS, ESPECIALLY RWANDA,
THE KIVU PROVINCE OF ZAIRE, TANZANIA, AND KENYA.

6. FINALLY, IT IS AN IMPORTANT AIM TO PROMOTE GREATER
AWARENESS ON THE PART OF LITERATE BURUNDIANS OF THE FACTS,
REALITIES, AND COMPLEXITIES OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD,
INCLUDING A GENERAL APPRECIATION OF AMERICAN FOREIGN
POLICIES.

A. THE KEY COURSE OF ACTION FOR ACHIEVING RELATIONS OF
SOME CONFIDENCE AND MODERATE INTIMACY WITH THE GOVERNMENT
OF BURUNDI IS THE EARLY LAUNCHING AND SUCCESSFUL IMPLE-
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MENTATION OF THE SIZABLE BILATERAL AID PROJECT (AT ABOUT
A \$1 MILLION ANNUAL LEVEL) WHICH HAS NOW BEEN AUTHORIZED.

THIS IS THE PRIME RESPONSIBILITY OF THE USAID OFFICER RECENTLY ARRIVED IN BUJUMBUR, AND NO POLITICAL PROBLEMS ARE ANTICIPATED IN PUSHING THIS ACTION FORWARD, ALTHOUGH, OF COURSE, OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTIES, AS IN ALL SUCH PROJECTS, CAN BE EXPECTED FROM TIME TO TIME.

B. ALSO IMPORTANT WILL BE THE CONTINUATION OF FOOD FOR PEACE DISTRIBUTIONS TO LARGE NUMBERS OF MOTHERS AND CHILDREN IN BURUNDI THROUGH THE CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES.

C. MODEST BUT IMPORTANT PROGRESS HAS ALREADY BEEN REGISTERED IN LAYING THE BASIS FOR A PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN THE CHILD SPACING AND FAMILY PLANNING FIELD, AND THIS JOINT EMBASSY-USAID EFFORT WILL REQUIRE ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL AND INTERMITTENT PERSONNEL SUPPORT.

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D. THE SELF-HELP PROGRAM SHOULD BE CONTINUED AT ITS CURRENT LEVEL OF \$90,000 TO \$100,000 PER YEAR TO ASSURE THE FLEXIBILITY IN SMALL PROJECT AID WHICH CAN BUILD UP MAXIMUM GOOD WILL IN DIVERSE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS.

E. GREATER U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN BURUNDI'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HAS ALREADY PRESENTED THE EMBASSY WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUBSTANTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, AND OTHER OFFICIALS, AND THESE OPENINGS HAVE BEEN UTILIZED TO ENCOURAGE THE NEW GOVERNMENT TO PURSUE VIGOROUSLY ITS POLICIES OF ETHNIC RECONCILIATION, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND OPPOSITION TO CORRUPTION. THIS SHOULD BE CONTINUED

TACTFULLY AT EVERY SUITABLE OPPORTUNITY, AS SHOULD CONVERSATIONS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS TOPICS, IN WHICH THE AIM IS TO NUDGE BURUNDI TO MORE GENUINELY NON-ALIGNED POSITIONS ON NUMEROUS INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, WHERE BURUNDI HAS HERETOFORE OFTEN ADOPTED BLATANTLY ANTI-U.S. STANDS.

F. THE EMBASSY SHOULD PURSUE THE STEPS ALREADY BEGUN TO ACQUAINT BURUNDIAN OFFICIALS WITH THE WORK OF THE PEACE CORPS AND WITH ITS PROBABLE UTILITY IN BURUNDI'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, ESPECIALLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE REALIZATION OF THE USAID BILATERAL PROJECT.

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G. FOR THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, THE EMBASSY HAS TRIED TO HELP TO KEEP POTENTIAL U.S. INVESTORS AWARE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN BURUNDI'S MINERAL SECTOR, AS WELL AS TO EXPLAIN TO BURUNDIAN OFFICIALS THE IMPACT OF WORLD ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND OF SPECIFIC TECHNICAL PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH BURUNDI'S NICKEL DEPOSITS ON THE READINESS OF FOREIGN ENTREPRENEURS TO MAKE LARGE SCALE INVESTMENTS IN BURUNDI. THIS FUNCTION HAS PROVED USEFUL TO BOTH SIDES IN THE PAST AND SHOULD BE PURSUED.

H. THE MODEST PROGRAM OF CU FUNDED TRAVEL GRANTS TO THE U.S. FOR BURUNDIANS IN VARIOUS LEADERSHIP GROUPS HAS PRODUCED EXCELLENT REACTIONS IN THE PAST AND SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AT THE SAME LEVEL, AS SHOULD ALSO CU FUNDING FOR KEEPING TWO FULBRIGHT PROFESSORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI.

I. THE U.S. CULTURAL CENTER HAS PERFORMED YEOMAN SERVICE, WITH ITS LIBRARY, FILM LOANS, PERIODICALS DISTRIBUTIONS, AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING ENGLISH TEACHING, IN ENHANCING THE AMERICAN IMAGE AND IN PROMOTING BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE AMERICAN HOME SCENE AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICIES. THIS FUNCTION WILL BECOME EVEN MORE IMPORTANT WITH THE NORMALIZATION OF U.S.-BURUNDI RELATIONS NOW IN FULL SWING AND WITH GROWING BURUNDIAN INTEREST IN THE NEW ACTIVIST U.S. POLICIES TOWARD AFRICA AND THE PROBLEMS OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT. THE CENTER HAS BEEN OPERATING FOR OVER 4 YEARS UNDER THE HANDICAP OF AN UNFILLED PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER'S POSITION, EVEN THOUGH THE ORIGINAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THIS MEASURE - THE 1972 TO 1974 FREEZE IN ALL NORMAL RELATIONS WITH BURUNDI - HAS LONG SINCE DISAPPEARED. IN FY 1978, BOTH THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW PAO AND THE ALLOCATION OF FULL USIA FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE CENTER (INSTEAD OF A RELIANCE ON PARTIAL STATE FUNDING) SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN ORDER TO REALIZE THE

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CENTER'S FULL POTENTIAL.

J. FINALLY, THE PRESENT MISSION STAFF OF TWELVE
AMERICANS SHOULD BE EXPANDED BY ONE GENERAL SERVICES
OFFICER IN FY 1978 TO COPE WITH THE ADDITIONAL
ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS ARISING FROM THE START OF THE
USAID PROGRAM, FROM THE INCREASE IN OFFICIAL VISITORS
TO BURUNDI, AND FROM THE EXPANSION IN EMBASSY PROGRAM
OPERATIONS.
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